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MASQUES OF EAST  
AND WEST



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# MASQUES OF EAST AND WEST

BY THOMAS WOOD STEVENS &  
KENNETH SAWYER GOODMAN

*Edited by* WALLACE RICE *with a Foreword by*  
PERCY MACKAYE



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# CONTENTS

FOREWORD <i>by Percy MacKaye</i>	ix
NOTE <i>T. W. S.</i>	xiii
THE DAIMIO'S HEAD	
THE MASQUE OF MONTEZUMA	
CÆSAR'S GODS	
RAINALD AND THE RED WOLF	
A PAGEANT FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY	
THE MASQUE OF QUETZAL'S BOWL	

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## FOREWORD

The renaissance of the Masque in America is attested by the works collected in this volume. It is also attested by the series of Masques published by the Bohemian Club of San Francisco. Considered in their totality, these Masques performed at the Art Institute of Chicago and those Grove Plays produced annually at midsummer in the Bohemian Redwood Grove, California, already loom large in their significance as authentic forms of living literature. America may well take pride in the conditions of social fellowship, which have demanded poets and artists to express them and in the gifted men who have been forthcoming to meet that demand.

For the prime significance of this renaissance of the masque-form is its assurance of a fresh outlet and an enlarged scope for the poet's social function.

In California the Grove Play writers collaborate closely with composers of music in which emphasis is laid upon sung choruses; their collaborations are produced out of doors in a majestic setting of nature.

In Chicago the Masques of the Art Institute and the Cliff Dwellers have been related by their writers to incidental music, but not to choral composition; the emphasis of collaboration has



been rather between poet and painter, than between poet and musician; and the Masques have been produced indoors for architectural backgrounds.

So in their form the Masques of California tend to verge upon the domain of opera; the Masques of Chicago tend to become plays.

With these technical differences, however, both in common require an actable poem adapted to special place and occasion for an audience directly co-operating—through spiritual sympathy and actual participation—in the poem's production.

Thus these requirements of masque making have developed in California the native powers and technique as poets of George Sterling, Will Irwin, Porter Garnett, Charles Field, Hermann Scheffauer and other Bohemian Club writers; and in Chicago notably Thomas Wood Stevens and Kenneth Sawyer Goodman—the authors of this volume.

Spontaneous and unimpeded collaboration between two dramatic poets is an accomplishment so rare and so rarely successful that one inevitably thinks of Beaumont and Fletcher to cite a success in this special kind as harmonious as Mr. Stevens and Mr. Goodman have achieved together.

Quick imagination, sensitive adaptability, fiery mental fusion are implied in this achievement, and those qualities, which are manifested in their relation to each other as poets, the authors display equally in their approach to the varied themes of these Masques.

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A Japanese fragrance of simplicity, for instance, pervades rhythm, atmosphere and choice of word in "The Daimio's Head" as sensitively as a very different sort of exotic color and incense burns in "Montezuma."

These qualities again are precious assets to the masque writer in the all important relation of his work to its visual stage production. For only through proper production can his work approximate its imagined values.

In these Masques Mr. Stevens and Mr. Goodman have collaborated both in imagination and in stage production. In so doing they have developed a sincerity of workmanship, a felicity of conception admirable in result: for their craft a happy precedent and a still happier promise.

PERCY MACKAYE.

*Cornish, New Hampshire*  
*May, 1914.*

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